

“Serving Those Who Served”

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Vol. 3 Issue 14

DECEMBER 2002

First Annual Conference Recognizes Needs of Women Veterans

In an effort to educate service providers on the unique and multifaceted needs of female veterans, the first Women Veterans Conference – “Celebrating and Serving Women Veterans” – was held in November. The two-day conference, sponsored by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), The Department of Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Health Care System (VAPSHCS), and Women Organizing Women (WOW), brought several hundred participants together, gathering information and sharing their programs.

Dr. Irene Trowell-Harris, director of the U. S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs Center for Women Veterans, delivered the keynote address. Trowell-Harris made herself available to attendees throughout the two days, as she discussed important information concerning women veterans programs from a national level, including Congressional Initiatives dealing with homeless veterans.

See Conference page 2



Dr. Irene Trowell-Harris, director of the U. S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs Center for Women Veterans, was the honored guest for the Women Veterans Conference.

“Serving Veterans In Changing Times”



CVC Web Development Team Members Left to Right: Mark Mascho, Pierce Co.; Ben Butkovich, Kittitas Co.; Sharon Maier, King Co.; Ric Price, WDVA; Kim Tully, Yakima Co.; and Joel Estey, King Co. Not pictured : R.J. Kraft, Kittitas Co.

The Veterans Assistance Fund (VAF) – known as the Soldiers and Sailors Relief Fund prior to the mid-1990’s – is administered by each of Washington’s 39 counties.

During the last ten years, County Veterans’ Programs have been seeking ways to meet the challenges of helping veterans by combining and sharing knowledge. One of the earliest issues faced by all was “county shopping”. The lack of communication between counties allowed veterans to go from county to county and collect funds.

In 1997, representatives from King, Pierce, Skagit and Snohomish Counties met

and the County Veterans Coalition (CVC) was born. Counties currently represented in the CVC include King, Whatcom, Snohomish, Pierce, Thurston, Cowlitz, Clark, Island, Skagit, Kittitas and Yakima.

CVC’s mission is to assess and address the evolving needs of the state’s veteran population and their families by improving the design and delivery of resources and services.

Specifically, the CVC works to:

- improve relations among County Veterans’ Programs;
- identify future service needs and opportunities;

- promote the CVC as a resource to other service providers; and
- promote closer working relationships with local, state and federal agencies.

Annual CVC conferences are held, with the third being in Ellensburg this past October. One of the major highlights of the conference was the unveiling of the new CVC Web-site at www.govlink.org/cvc. A state map allows viewers to click on any of Washington’s 39 counties and have access to a variety of services available to veterans, beginning with county contacts.

Regular meetings of the CVC are held on the third Wednesday of the month from January through September and typically begin at 10:00 a.m. *If you would like to host a CVC meeting in your community, please contact Pierce County Veterans Program Manager Mark Mascho at cvc@govlink.org, mmascho@co.pierce.wa.us or (253) 798-7449/7439.*

For additional information on the CVC, contact Joel Estey, King County Veterans Program Coordinator at (206) 296-7656 or joel.estey@metrokc.gov

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While right now is not a “popular” time to be associated with state government, your state provides valuable services to truly deserving people. People such as yourselves, your parents, and for many, your children. Individuals who have chosen to sacrifice themselves and their families for the good of their country and community deserve the best services government can provide. We as a nation owe a debt to veterans.

Washington is home to more than 670,000 veterans. One out of nine Washington State residents has served in the Armed Forces. Many believe the veteran population is small and that it is getting even smaller. But in Washington, that is simply not true. Washington's veteran population rose by almost four percent over the last 10 years, while the national population fell by five percent.

At the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, the agency Mission is “Serving Those Who Served.” Recent budget reductions and an emphasis on streamlining government practices have fundamentally changed the way we do business – however the focus on our Mission has not changed.

With more budget cuts anticipated next year, this is truly a time of transition within the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs. But, the most exciting part is the opportunity – and the need – for collaboration and coordination

of veterans services with county governments, city governments and private organizations such as Veteran Service Organizations.

I think we all recognize that neither the federal government nor the state government are just going to send Washington's veterans more resources to meet their growing needs. But, we can ask them to recognize the changes within our state. We can seek their input and participation as partners. And with the success of the partnerships, we can ask that the resources be provided to ensure these innovative ideas are available to veterans.

“We all have a part in serving those who served.”

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs has been working diligently for years, developing plans and partnerships to ensure we can meet the changing needs of veterans. Some examples are listed here:

The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs works with many Veteran Service Organizations. These partnerships help service officers reach out to veterans who are unaware of how to access their veterans benefits. Our combined efforts have made Washington State the 2nd in the nation in terms of the percent of veterans receiving compensation and pension, 11.9 percent, versus the national average of 9.6 percent. These VA payments total over 700 million dollars per year to veterans and their families who in turn contribute to our economy by purchasing goods and services.

Another example is a partnership with King County through what's known as the V.I.P. or Veterans Incarcerated Project. This program

reaches out to veterans in King County jails offering them a rehabilitation program aimed at keeping them out of jail. And, it works! The recidivism rate for the V.I.P. is significantly lower than for the overall jail population. You can bet that other counties, are looking to duplicate this program to reduce costs to their own local governments.

The V.I.E.W. or Veterans Independent Enterprises of Washington in Fife offers one template for how to create a successful transitional program. VIEW provides homeless veterans, who are clean and sober, and in need of job training, counseling and rehabilitation with services, while also providing secure housing and on-site counseling. They are a model of how the VA, Veterans Service Organizations and private industry can achieve positive results together.

I want to highlight another local program. For the past few years it has brought together veterans and members of the community to genuinely thank veterans for their service. I am referring to the Veterans Appreciation Dinner. The program is not put together by any one group, but is a true collaborative effort of the Lacey and Olympia communities, the FreeMasons of Washington, Knights of Columbus, Elks, Lions, other organizations and the veterans community.

We all have a part in serving those who served. Whether it's working through an organization that provides veterans services or partners with veterans programs. Whether it's thanking a service member for their sacrifice or ensuring our children understand that freedom is not free. We, as a community, as a state, and as a nation owe veterans not only our gratitude, but, our commitment to meet their needs now and into the future.

Conference from page one

“The Federal VA has estimated there are 11,000 homeless women veterans on the street each day,” said Trowell-Harris. “We know there are more and must work to broaden the definition of “homeless” in the McKinney Act. We need to include those women veterans who are living with friends or relatives.”

In addition to homeless issues, information was provided on available healthcare management, alternative medicine, substance abuse and PTSD, as well as VA claims and disability processes.

“These two days have focused on the need for essential service delivery to women veterans,” said WDVA

assistant director Alfie Alvarado-Ramos. “By recognizing how women veterans are now provided benefits and highlighting what amenities are available through community partnerships, we can better serve women veterans.”

Centralized Admissions Team - Serving Veterans

The WDVA Centralized Admissions Team (CAT) understands how difficult it is for family members to make the emotional decision to place their loved one in a nursing care facility.

That is why the team developed a streamlined admissions process, aimed at helping veterans and their families make a smooth transition to one of the State's three Veterans Homes. Through the compassion of CAT members Robin Wittenberg and Mac Harris, Washington Veterans are being served as quickly and professionally as possible.

As calls are received through the state's toll free admissions line - 1-888-VETS-R-US - Harris is able to assess initial eligibility for admission. For example, veterans must have received an honorable discharge and meet income requirements. In addition, Harris is often able to assess the potential level of care needed by the veteran, something he passes on to Wittenberg in his referral. "I can usually get a pretty accurate picture of the level of care they'll require. Even though Robin will complete a medical assessment, I think it helps her if I can provide some feedback from my phone conversations. Sometimes people are more open on the phone than when you're sitting across the table from them."

Once the application is forwarded to Wittenberg, she contacts the veteran or their advocate to perform an initial assessment. The next step in the process is usually up to the veteran and their family.

"We have been able to accommodate veterans within 24 hours, depending on the medical need and the veteran's wishes," said



Robin Wittenberg and Mac Harris review applications for admittance to a WA Veterans Home.

Wittenberg, "but we also understand that some people aren't quite ready to make an immediate move."

Nicknamed the "Road Warrior" due to the thousands of miles covered annually, Wittenberg feels it is a necessary part of the process to meet and assess all applicants in person. With the addition of the Spokane Veterans Home, partnerships have been formed in Spokane to ensure all veterans are contacted and assessed as quickly as possible.

In meetings with veterans, their families, or the countless veterans groups and social workers Wittenberg encounters, customer service has emerged as the key to success. "Customer service is the bottom line in any situation I am in," said Wittenberg, "I am often the first person they meet from any of the State Veterans Homes, therefore I have to strive to always reflect the wonderful job our Homes do."

Once Wittenberg's assessment is complete, she begins her work with the Nursing Supervisor at the chosen Veterans Home. In addition to sending the necessary paperwork, Wittenberg also adds her personal assessment to the mix, something appreciated by the nursing staff and families alike.

Once accepted, veterans are notified by Wittenberg or Harris and the remainder of the arrangements are made.

As with any nursing care facility, there are times when veterans are denied admission. "Part of my job is to offer alternatives," explained Wittenberg. "If we cannot provide the level of care necessary, we would do them and our current residents a disservice by admitting them. What I can do, is offer other resources or contacts to assist them in finding the right placement."

The CAT has provided hundreds of placements since June 2000, and both Wittenberg and Harris agree this admissions process is serving veterans well. "We now have a process people can manage," said Harris. "They deal with Robin or Mac and aren't just lost in the system."

The Washington Veterans Homes offer Skilled and Light Nursing Care to Medicaid eligible veterans, and beds are available at all three locations. In addition, Spokane now has 16 Medicare beds available.

To contact the Centralized Admissions Team, call 1-877-VETS-R-US (1-877-838-7787). Applications for the State Veterans Homes are also available online at www.dva.wa.gov.

Medicare Certification

The Spokane Veterans Home became the first State Veterans Home to certify Medicare beds for our state's veterans. The initial Medicare Unit opened on July 1, 2002, with a total of ten beds. Since that time, the demand for the beds has been so strong that an additional six beds were requested and were granted on December 1, 2002.

Medicare is a benefit which becomes available after a 3 day "qualifying" stay in a hospital. Because the first 20 days of nursing home care are covered 100% by Medicare, there are many people who prefer to use their Medicare benefits before having to rely on Medicaid or other insurance. After the first 20 days, there is a co-pay which is often covered by other insurance providers for up to 100 days. After the Medicare benefit is exhausted, residents can revert to Medicaid or other insurance without having to transfer to another facility.

For more information on the Spokane Veterans Home, please call (509) 344-5770 or 1-877-VETS-R-US.

Street Talk

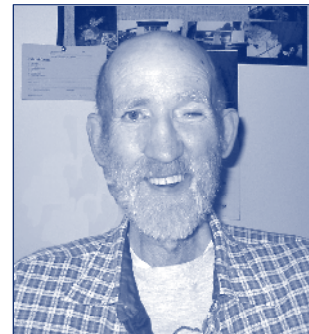
With the Spokane Veterans Home Residents

What was the worst Winter storm you lived through and what was it like?



BOB IRONS

"About 5 years ago with the ice storm. The lights went out and we had no heat. My wife and I stayed with friends. We finally got to go home after 3 days."



KEN GLASPEY

"I lived in the Spokane Valley when the ice storm hit. I lost power for 3 days. I stayed at the Eagles lodge during the day and went home at night."



JOSEPH FLANNIGAN

"In 1936 I lived in Hartford, Connecticut. I remember a storm we had in which the water rose so high it was like a tidal wave. My

mother told my brother Tom to put the cars out on the avenue so they wouldn't get hit by falling debris. We had great big oak trees that lined our streets that fell. We had lots of fire wood that fall and winter."



ESTER TALBOT

"When I was about 11 years old I lived in Nebraska. The snow was so deep we couldn't go anywhere. The snow was so deep it went over the top of the cherry trees. We used to walk on top

of the snow above the cherry trees. We couldn't go back to school until February 1st."

Citizens Recognized for Service to Veterans

This Veterans Day, several Washington residents were honored as they received Outstanding Service to Veterans Awards for their contributions to Washington state's veterans and their families during the last year.

The awards - co-sponsored each year by the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) and the state Department of Veterans Affairs - recognize individuals who devote time and energy to improving the lives of Washington's veteran community.

Outstanding Service Officer— Carol Childers



Childers retired from the U.S. Navy after serving 23 years and is one of the WDVA Claims Quality Assurance Reviewers, where her expertise is providing

invaluable service to veterans.

Outstanding Male Non-Veteran— Congressman Adam Smith

Congressman Adam Smith serves the 9th congressional district, where he hosts regular town hall meetings with veterans throughout his district to listen to their concerns and ideas on issues relating to veterans. He serves as a member of the United States House Armed Services Committee and consistently supports veterans' legislation. Congressman Smith is an advocate of modernizing the military, streamlining procurement practices and encouraging the Department of Defense to invest in new technologies.

Outstanding Volunteer Service Officers—RJ Kraft and Ben Butkovich

Col. Reinholt J. Kraft spent 35 years in the U.S. Army, including serving in Vietnam as a Field Artillery Operations Officer, and Ben Butkovich served in the U.S. Army for 13 years as a Green Beret. Under their guidance, leadership and hard work, the Kittitas County Veterans Coalition has registered more than 1200 client contacts, filed over 200 VA claims and – to date – benefits and entitlement claims have resulted in over \$500,000 coming into the Kittitas County economy annually.



(left to Right) RJ Kraft; Charles Karczewski, VAAC Chair; John King, WDVA Director; Ben Butkovich; and Fran Agnes, VAAC member.

Outstanding Female Non-Veteran — Sharon Maier



Maier, a Web Site Development Coordinator for King County / Washington State University Cooperative Extension, was recently asked to develop a web site for the County Veterans Coalition (CVC),

which was unveiled and went on-line last month. Her design is the beginning of a new way that counties can communicate and do business with each other, because it is a tool for linking all the counties veterans programs in the state of Washington.

Outstanding Veteran Volunteer— Bernie Moskowitz

A member of the Tahoma National Cemetery Support Group since 1998, Bernie sounds TAPS at interments, as often as possible.



Outstanding Employee— Dr. Mack Orsborn

In 1999, Dr. Orsborn began an extended version of the ex-POW protocol examination, which has lead to tracking the prevalence of presumptive disease in the ex-POW population. His findings have resulted in 100% service-connected disability ratings for the ex-POWs examined, as well as earning Dr. Orsborn national commendations for his work and dedication.



(left to right) Fran Agnes; Dr. Orsborn; and John King.

Outstanding Legislator— Representative Dave Schmidt



A Washington National Guardsman for 18 years, Representative Schmidt sponsored legislation changing the definition of a veteran to include peacetime veterans and those who have completed their

service in the Washington State National Guard or the Reserves.

He co-sponsored legislation that provided for the establishment of the Spokane Veterans Home and legislation that protected the military records of veterans from identity thieves.

As a member of the Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs, he has an open door for veterans who look to his leadership in assisting them with their ideas and issues.

The honorees were presented during the annual Veterans Day Parade in Auburn on Nov. 9, and again honored at a luncheon at the Auburn Senior Center later that day.

Nomination forms for next year's awards can be obtained from the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs by calling (360) 725-2153.

Special Award of Merit — Oria Berndt

Oria Berndt served for more than 30 years in the U.S. Army, where in the early 60s he was chosen as one of the Army's first Command Sergeant Majors. Since his retirement, he has served as Regional Director for the Noncommissioned Officers Association; served on the Pierce County Veterans Advisory Board; and has supported legislation enhancing the quality of life for veterans and their families. Berndt is a member of the Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee and served as Chairman of the Committee for two consecutive years, and served as a principle advisor to the WDVA during the Feasibility Study and Master Plan.



Fran Agnes (left) and John King, present a Special Award of Merit to Oria Berndt (center).

Washington State WWII Documentary Receives National Acclaim

OLYMPIA, WA — A locally produced documentary, *WHEN WE WERE KIDS... WE WENT TO WAR* recently received five national awards. This emotionally charged documentary, featuring over 60 Washington State residents, provides a glimpse into the personal side of WWII by those who experienced combat on the front lines as well as those who served on the home front.

Over five years in the making, the documentary is the result of a dream of some Washington State WWII veterans who felt it was important to tell their own stories in their own words before they pass away.

"This is about real people, real choices, and real experiences," said Bill Merifield, Chairman of the WWII Memorial Educational Foundation. "There were many challenges and trauma during that difficult time in our nation's history. From the challenges of gas rationing, selling bonds, collecting tin and entering the workforce for the first time, to the trauma of internment and loss of loved ones. All of these stories tell us what life was like during a wartime era."

The award-winning documentary is only one element of the larger project titled *The Voices of WWII*. It includes documenting additional oral histories of WWII era citizens, an educational web site complete with classroom lesson plans, and teacher in-service workshops presented statewide during the 2002-2003 school year.

"Washington State is way ahead of the

game in terms of capturing the essence of WWII oral history," said Karl Schmidt, executive director of Bristol Productions Ltd. from Olympia and producer of the documentary. "There are groups all across the U.S. recording these valuable stories, but they don't make them accessible."

We not only have completed the documentary that will air on some PBS affiliates, but we have created an educational web site, www.wwiihistoryclass.com where the more than 200 hours of oral history transcripts will be available for research by teachers, students, historians, and most importantly family members."

This fall the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction distributed 2,000 *WWII Voices In the Classroom* kits to Washington schools just prior to Veterans Day. The kit contains the award-winning documentary *When We Were Kids... We Went to War*, a CD with educational lesson plans, and access to the web site.

"This is an amazing project on many levels, and I have been honored to work on it," Schmidt said. "Teachers rave about how their students connect with this on a very personal level, especially in light of the tragedies of September 11. Plus, a generation that made the ultimate sacrifice for our country gets to tell their true story for generations to come. They do not brag or boast, they just tell us about a job that had to be done, how they did it, and how they felt about it."



Above Logo is the infamous "Dirty Dozen", who were the last remaining of 161st Regiment combat team from Spokane and Western Washington. Original unit of 120 men left for the Philippines in 1941.

**When We Were Kids... We Went to War*, has recently received the following awards:

- ◆ Aurora Platinum Best of Show Documentary Historical Event www.auroraawards.com
- ◆ Telly Finalist History/Biographical www.tellyawards.com
- ◆ Telly Finalist Documentary Category www.tellyawards.com
- ◆ AXIEM Silver Educational Category
- ◆ AXIEM Silver Documentary Category www.axiemawards.com

For more information about the documentary and educational website contact:

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National WWII Memorial Dedication Set for Memorial Day Weekend 2004

America's World War II veterans have waited 57 years for a national memorial commemorating their service and sacrifice. Their wait is down to 18 months.

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) today announced that the National World War II Memorial will be dedicated in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, May 29, 2004.

The Memorial Day weekend celebration on the National Mall will culminate an 11-year effort to honor America's World War II generation. The memorial was authorized by Congress in 1993. Construction began in September 2001 after several years of fund raising and public hearings.

ABMC Chairman General P. X. Kelley, USMC (Ret), said, "Veterans are planning reunions in conjunction with the dedication. With construction on schedule for completion in spring 2004, we want to give veterans and their families plenty of time to make travel plans."

Dedication events could include a WWII-themed exhibition on the Mall staged in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, a memorial service at the Washington National Cathedral, and related activities throughout the city.

Event details will be available, as they are confirmed, on the memorial's web site (www.wwiimemorial.com) or toll free number (800-639-4WW2).

The memorial is being funded primarily by private donations and has received nearly \$189 million in cash and pledges. It is being built on the Mall between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument.

World War II will be the only 20th century event commemorated on the Mall's central axis.

Veterans Advocate Honored



Senator Snyder / Charles Karczewski / Bette Snyder

The Governor's Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee (VAAC) recently honored State Senator Sid Snyder, a WWII veteran, for his work with the veterans community and his leadership on issues important to Washington veterans.

Snyder, who recently retired from his position as State Senator for the 19th District, has been a tireless advocate for veterans in the Washington State Legislature. "Senator Snyder's contributions to veterans causes, including his work on the WWII Memorial on the Capitol Campus, are appreciated by veterans throughout the state," said VAAC Chairman Charles Karczewski. "His leadership will be sorely missed, but we wish Sid and Bette the very best in their retirement."

In the Spirit Washington Citizens

Caring,

During this holiday season, the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs wanted to highlight the many activities that occur throughout the year making the lives of Washington State's veterans a little better. Volunteers and organizations provide time, services and funding to veterans at the three State Veterans Homes and to veterans throughout the state. In addition, there are many partnerships between organizations that bring information and services to veterans through outreach programs and events.

The next several pages focus on some contributions and events that have occurred over the past several months. However, there are many additional participants who, throughout the years, continue to offer their support.

Our thanks goes out to each and every individual and organization who has helped over the last year. Working together, we are making a difference!



With the help of U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell and South Kitsap Schools Superintendent Dr. Beverly Cheney, the Washington Veterans Home presented thirty-one residents with their high-school diplomas. The ceremony was part of "Operation Recognition" for WWII veterans who missed graduation to serve in the war.

South Kitsap High School supplied the diplomas, and volunteers gathered enough

graduation robes for each resident to wear. Senator Cantwell shared a personal story about her own father with the overflowing crowd at Retsil. Her father left high school early to join the military in WWII.

Presenting the diplomas, Cantwell said, "These aren't just diplomas of high school graduates, they are diplomas of men and women who have served our country with honor and who have fought for freedom."



Eugene Wyman (left) and Theodore Spence



Handy Hodge

A complete list of the Class of 2002 is available at www.dva.wa.gov/news.htm under *Retsil Presents its Class of 2002*.

Graduates at the Washington Soldiers Home were honored at a special ceremony in Orting last May.

To learn more about Operation Recognition go to www.dva.wa.gov/Diploma.htm



Allan Douglass



William Knoepfle and Ella Spatz



Raymond Burrows

Sharing



(Left) Bathing rooms at the Washington Veterans Home were recently given a facelift to make them more homelike and appealing for residents in the nursing care buildings. A little wallpaper and some art work made a world of difference in this room! The time and materials were donated by the Family Support Group from the USS Carl Vinson.

(Bottom Left) Time-intensive projects, such as planting flowers and maintaining gardens, have been taken on by volunteer groups at the State Veterans Homes. Pictured below, the Master Gardeners of Kitsap County are planting bulbs for Spring bloom at the Veterans Home Cemetery.

(Bottom Right) Of importance to many residents at the three Veterans Homes are places where they can spend some time reflecting or just take in the surrounding beauty of their environment. This covered patio is a new area for residents of the Veterans Home to do just that. The South Kitsap Rotary donated all materials and labor for the patio.



During the holidays, the State Veterans Homes are decorated by staff members and volunteers. The Veterans Home received this beautifully decorated Christmas tree with a "Sailor's Pride - Child's Delight" theme. The tree was purchased at a charity auction and was then donated by Dr. and Mrs. Wicks.

Honor Veterans by...



Top: For residents at the State Veterans Homes, it can sometimes be difficult to replace or purchase items such as televisions, VCRs or radios. Yet, these items provide an important form of entertainment for residents. Recently, members of the Northport American Legion Post No. 158 gathered donations of televisions and VCRs for the Spokane Veterans Home. \$1000 was also raised for a big-screen T.V. for the Home's living room.



Middle: In western Washington, the Veterans Homes have had pets for several years providing residents with the unconditional attention only a dog or cat can bring! The Spokane Veterans Home recently welcomed its newest four-legged resident, Shi, donated by the Spokane Humane Society.



Right: Partnerships with schools and other community groups provide the opportunity for children to learn from veterans, and also provides the opportunity for nursing home residents to interact with people of all ages. Shown here are students from Finch Elementary who recently sang with veterans in Spokane to celebrate Veterans Day.



For the first time, the American Legion sponsored a Gift Shop for the residents of the Soldiers Home. They have been conducted at Retsil for several years, and for the veterans at the Puget Sound VA Hospitals. These Gift Shops enable the residents to select gifts for their family and friends, have them gift wrapped and mailed. The selection of gifts is of very good quality and the American Legion picks up the tab.



Bryce Lilly, Army Air Corps Master SGT

There are many well known faces in the veterans community, those who volunteer their time to numerous organizations and causes and seem to be at every meeting or event. Bryce Lilly was one of those veterans whose contributions and spirit of volunteerism will not be forgotten. His songs were heard by thousands over the years and he was an inspiration to those who knew him.



Kay Travis displays her handy work.

Thousands of hours of needlework have produced hundreds of quilts and lap blankets for residents of the State Veterans Homes. Not only are these blankets functional, they also serve as individual reminders that someone donated their time and talent to make a veteran just a little more comfortable. Pictured left is Kay Travis, who recently donated 40 lap robes to the State Veterans Homes.



Throughout the Soldiers Home campus, benches are placed among the trees and along the walkways. Over the years, heavy use and exposure to the elements had taken their toll and the benches were in need of repairs. Several boy scouts donated 360 hours of their

time and replaced the wooden slats on 43 benches. Shown here are Kurt Lee Byrne Jr., who earned his Eagle Scout badge on this project, and Mike Yandle, Home carpenter. Ron Sherman of McFarland Cascade and Jack Delp of Lumbermen's donated \$1,250 in materials for the project.

Contributions from Veterans Service Organizations are examples of how veterans come to the aid of other veterans. Pictured right, the Superintendent of the Soldiers Home receives a donation of \$850 for privacy curtains in the rehabilitation areas from Milton Till, representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Pictured below, representatives of the VFW Auxiliary donate \$150 to the Soldiers Home Rec. Staff for the Home's Activity Program.



Outdoor shelters offer solitude to residents and the opportunity for reflection. Improvements, in the form of a shade system, are planned for the picnic Gazebo area at the Soldiers Home. Will Morgan, representing the Dept. of WA MOPH, recently presented WSH Superintendent Jerry Towne with a \$637.50 donation.

The Soldiers Home has raised \$1500 toward its \$4500 goal for this project.



Providing a connection between the youth in our communities to nursing home residents is an important activity for the children and the adults! The State Veterans Homes are visited by school choirs and drama groups throughout the year, offering students a valuable learning experience and the veterans some much appreciated entertainment. Pictured above is the Hoquiam High School Choir.

and Working Together

Continued →

Working Together

Annual Stand-Downs provide homeless veterans access to services in a non-threatening, non-judgmental environment. Services such as haircuts - provided here by Bates Cosmetology students - medical care - including flu shots and vital checks - provided by the VA Puget Sound Health Care System and dental services - provided by



the NW Medical Team International - go a long way toward improving the lives of area veterans whose lives are affected by homelessness. Providers offering clothing, blankets and employment counseling also participate in Stand-Downs throughout Washington State.



Across the state, organizations pay tribute to veterans at ceremonies throughout the year. For the second year, a unique partnership of organizations in the South Sound has sponsored a Veterans Appreciation Dinner. The dinner provides the opportunity for community members to honor those who have served in the military. This years event was jointly sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, The FreeMasons of Washington, Olympia Elks Lodge #186, American Legion Post #3 and the Lion's Club.



The Washington Department of Veterans Affairs participates actively with a variety of groups and Veterans Service Organizations. As an example, Tribal Veterans Representatives met with WDVA staff members to plan for a conference to be held April 17 & 18, 2003. If you would like information on the Tribal Veterans Representatives Conference, please contact Frank Cordero at 360-758-7501 or hyshqe@aol.com .



Right: Paying tribute to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial 20th Anniversary Celebration, The Moving Wall came to SeaTac, Washington from October 17-23. Made possible by Washington Memorial Park and a cadre of volunteers, including veterans and veteran organizations, The Moving Wall has helped many veterans find healing. The sole purpose of The Moving Wall is to share this tribute to the 2.7 million men and women who served in the U.S. Military in Vietnam with people across the country.



Veterans Information and Assistance Fair 2003 Schedule

Date/Time	Location	VCSC	Date/Time	Location	VCSC	Date/Time	Location	VCSC
* Clinic	Kingston Library	Reese	** LTCIF	The Elks Lodge	Reese	* Clinic	N. Mason Timberland Library	Reese
Thur, Jan 16	11212 State Hwy 104		Sat, March 15	4131 Pine Road NE		Tue, May 6	NE 23081 Hwy 3	
3pm - 7pm	Kingston		11am - 4pm	Bremerton		3pm - 7pm	Belfair	
Friday, Jan 17	VFW Post 379	James	Sat, Mar 15	Hal Holmes Center	Pfannenstiel	* Clinic	William G. Reed Public Library	Reese
9am - 3pm	5th Ave & Walnut		9am - 3pm	201 N. Ruby St.		Thur, May 8	7th and Alder	
	Yakima			Ellensburg		3pm - 7pm	Shelton	
Sat, Jan 18	VFW Post 7329	Reese	Sat, Mar 15	Am Legion # 7	Pfannenstiel	Sat, May 10	Am Legion #92	Pfannenstiel
11am - 4pm	26096 W. 1st St		10am - 3pm	W. Bakerview Rd.		9am - 3pm	88th St. NW	
	Kingston			Bellingham			Stanwood	
Friday, Jan 24	Nat'l Guard Armory	Pfannenstiel	* Clinic	Kitsap Regional Library	Reese	Sat, May 10	Theler Community Center	Reese
3pm - 7pm	3928 Williamson Way		Wed, Mar 19	700 NE Lincoln Road		11 am - 4pm	22821 NE State Hwy 3	
	Bellingham		3pm - 7pm	Poulsbo			Belfair	
* Clinic	Sequim Branch Library	Reese	Sat, Mar 22	National Guard Armory	Reese	Thur, May 22	Spokane Fall Comm College	James
Tue, Feb 11	630 N. Sequim Ave.		11am - 4 pm	19133 Jensen St		9am - 2pm	3410 W Ft. Geo Wright Dr	
3pm - 7pm	Sequim			Poulsbo			Spokane	
* Clinic	Port Angeles Branch Library	Reese	* Clinic	Timberland Library	Reese	Sat June 14	American Legion Post #10	James
Wed, Feb 12	2210 S. Peabody Street		Tue, April 15	121 East Market Street		9am - 3pm	208 N. Wenatchee Ave	
3pm - 7pm	Port Angeles		3pm - 7pm	Aberdeen			Wenatchee	
Sat, Feb 15	The Armory Mall	Reese	Sat, April 19	Elks Lodge	Reese	* Clinic	Port Townsend Public Library-	Reese
11am - 4pm	228 W. 1st St		11am - 4pm	624 'K' St.		Thur, June 19	1220 Lawrence Street	
	Port Angeles			Hoquiam		3pm - 7pm	Port Townsend	
** LTCIF	Burlington Senior Center	Pfannenstiel	Sat, April 19	IOOF Hall	Pfannenstiel	Sat, June 21	WSU Extension	Reese
Thur, Feb 20	1011 Greenleaf Ave.		10am - 3pm	721 SE Barrington Dr		11am - 4pm	201 W. Patison	
1pm - 3:30pm	Burlington			Oak Harbor			Port Hadlock	
Sat, Feb 22	Am Legion #43	Pfannenstiel	Sat, April 26	National Guard Armory	James	Sat, June 21	VFW Post #1561	Pfannenstiel
10am - 3pm	701 Murdock St.		9am - 4pm	5th & Clark		10am - 3pm	325 East 3rd St	
	Sedro Woolley			Pasco			Snohomish	

* Veterans Benefits Clinics
** Long Term Care Information Fair

Check for updates at www.dva.wa.gov/vcsc

Organizations wanting to provide information at a fair, should contact the appropriate Veterans Community Service Coordinator:
Lynda Reese - 360-478-4566 or (888) 341-7167 lynda@dva.wa.gov
Jerry Pfannestiel - 360-257-5756 or (800) 986-0790 gerald@dva.wa.gov
Lon James - 509-457-2790 or 1-888-341-7718 or 360-455-2935 lonniej@dva.wa.gov

In The Spotlight

“Serving Those Who Have Served” takes on new meaning when the service provider and recipient share a similar background. At the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, the number of employees who are veterans ranks high, providing a personal connection with clients not always achieved in other agencies.

State law mandates veterans hold the positions of Director, Deputy Director and Assistant Director. In this issue, we have the opportunity to share a glimpse of days gone by with the top three executives of the agency, who really were young once!



Lourdes E. Alvarado-Ramos (Alfie) Assistant Director



Alfie, born and raised in Puerto Rico, is the eldest of five children. After high school graduation, she planned to attend Nursing school. When a financial aid shortage made that impossible, her next choice was to join the Army as a

Corpsman. “It was really fortunate that the nursing school didn’t work out, because I discovered very quickly that I didn’t like nursing,” said Alfie. Instead, she went into dental hygiene where she made her career for the next 17 years, all over the world. Then she made history, as she became the first woman in her profession to be promoted to Command Sgt. Major. At that point, she went back into the medical field, and completed her 21-year Army career as the Command Sergeant Major of Madigan Army Medical Center.

Alfie returns to Puerto Rico every Christmas, a promise she made to her parents when she left there in November 1971.

Why did you go into the military?

My father was a Staff Sgt. in the National Guard, and the pride he showed in serving inspired me and inspired my love for the Army.

What was one of the most memorable times during your service?

I was stationed in Berlin in 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down. I have pictures and even have a piece of the wall.

Why do you think you were able to accomplish what you have, especially as a woman in the military?

I worked very hard. I volunteered for jobs that no one else wanted.

Tell us about your name.

Lourdes is my first name, Alvarado is my father’s name and Ramos is my mother’s name, as is the custom in Puerto Rico.

And the Alfie part?

In January 1972, I’m in the barracks in San Antonio, and these metal beds are lined up, one after the other, after the other. One of the other soldiers, Helen Payne, was laying on her bed, and I can still see her wig hanging on the bedpost as she says “Your name is too hard! You need a nickname. We’re going to call you Alfie!” And it stuck. My only regret is that I hadn’t thought quick enough and picked my own, because it would have been Lou. That would have made more sense.

John M. King, Director

John was born and raised in White Center, Washington as the oldest son of seven children. His Dad served in the Navy during WWII and then spent 25 years as a Seattle Firefighter, in addition to running a T.V. repair shop.

John’s youth was spent at parochial schools and the seminary, with graduation from O’Dea High School in 1966. Inducted into the U.S. Army in March 1967, John left for Vietnam in August of that year with the 1st Cav. Div. as an E-2 and returned the following August as an E-6, weapons platoon staff sergeant. John spent his last five months of duty stationed at Fort Lewis in support of a Basic Training Unit and doing on-the-job training in electronics.

After discharge, John attended the University of Washington earning a BS in psychology and a Masters in Social Work Administration. He and his wife, Joy, have been married over 30 years, have 2 sons and are going to be grandparents very soon.



Why did you go into the military?

After high school, I tried to work full time and attend college. Knowing I wasn’t doing well, I volunteered for the draft with the goal of serving two years, getting out and attending college on the GI Bill. Those two degrees greatly assisted my 27-year career in State government.

What was one of the most memorable times during your service?

I got to go to Hong Kong for R&R. I can still see and taste that glass of milk and clubhouse sandwich.

Also, since it was Leap Year, I had to spend an extra day in ‘Nam.

How has being at WDVA affected your life?

I’m coming full circle. I didn’t even realize I had come back from Vietnam and had all but lost my sense of patriotism. Working here has helped me make sense of my service. I feel real empathy for other veterans and can accept that there is no “getting over it”. I’ve also rekindled a sense of being my brothers keeper that was so prevalent in ‘Nam. 30 years later, it is fulfilling to find this vocation, to know my job is being my brother’s keeper, and that I can make a difference, for Veterans and their families.

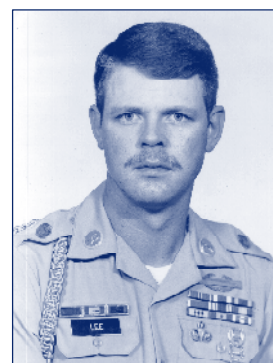
John E. Lee, Deputy Director

John was born and raised in a small community in West Virginia, the youngest of 3 boys. He met his wife, Tami, in 5th grade and by junior high they were playing post office and attending dances. They were married in May 1968, and by Christmas of that year, John was in Vietnam as a Corporal with the 173rd Airborne.

When he returned from ‘Nam, John’s welcome home was that of a small community steeped in the custom of honoring those who defended freedom, and a family with a long and rich tradition of serving in the military.

After his Vietnam experience, John decided to make the military a career. He transferred to the 82nd Airborne, attended Ranger school and “jumped out of a lot of airplanes.”

John’s military career took him through the post-Vietnam days of the early 1970’s, through the Army “re-invention”, and the Volunteer Army taking over. He served as a Basic Training Drill Sergeant, and Infantry First Sergeant and spent the last of his 21 years in the military as the Command Sergeant Major for the 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry and the CSM of the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis. He and Tami have two sons and two grandsons.



Why did you go into the military?

My Dad was a WWII veteran and both my older brothers served in the Air Force. In fact, my brother Frank was in Vietnam in 1964. But, to answer your question, I was drafted. I didn’t take my first year in college quite as seriously as they would have liked me to. I was privileged to return from Vietnam with life and limb, and started looking at the military as a career that would provide meaning and purpose to my life.

What was one of the most memorable times during your service?

Taking over my first Infantry unit in Berlin as 1st Sgt. The feeling of responsibility walking into the office my first day and having 150 soldiers waiting to have me say “fall-in” for morning formation was unbelievable.

How has being at WDVA affected your life?

It has been a wonderful extension of my military service. It has fulfilled my need to stay connected to the Army, while allowing me to continue in public service.

VA NAMES CARES INITIATIVES FOR VISN 20

With the announcement of CARES Planning Initiatives for each Veterans Integrated Service Network, VA has reached another milestone in CARES (Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services).

WHAT ARE CARES PLANNING INITIATIVES?

Simply put, Planning Initiatives are the gaps between services VA has now and what will be needed in the years 2012 and 2022 to meet veterans’ health care needs. Planning Initiatives also can identify opportunities for collaboration with the Department of Defense, Veterans Benefits Administration, National Cemeteries Administration, academic affiliates and the community. These Initiatives are not decisions and not plans, just gaps. The plans will develop as VISNs analyze the initiatives, consult veterans and other stakeholders, and decide how to resolve the gaps.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

For the next three months, VISN 20 CARES Market Planning Committees will develop plans to deal with the gaps and meet projected future health care needs of veterans. The teams will conduct briefings and seek input from veterans, Veterans Service Organizations, employees and others as they develop ideas and recommendations. In February, 2003, the VISN 20 CARES Planning Committee and the Network Director will review these recommendations, which will be forwarded by February 28 to the National

CARES Program Office. Then an Independent National Commission will hold stakeholder meetings throughout the country and review the Draft National CARES Plan before a recommendation is made to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

WHAT ARE THE VISN 20 PLANNING INITIATIVES?

The VISN 20 Planning Initiatives are listed below. CARES planning initiatives for all VISNs can be found at <http://www.va.gov/CARES>. Note that gaps can be projections of increases or decreases in future demand, but almost all VISN 20 gaps reflect a need for increased future services.

VISN-Wide

- No significant gaps in special disability programs (review of programs is ongoing).
- Reduction of vacant space by at least 10% in FY 2004; 30% in FY 2005.
- Address lead paint concerns.

Inland North Market

- Gaps in outpatient primary, specialty, and mental health care and inpatient psychiatry.
- Gaps in access to acute primary, acute hospital and tertiary care.
- Review of projected small bed sections (<10 beds) for quality and cost efficiency at Walla Walla (medicine) and Spokane (surgery).
- NCA construction of columbarium on Walla Walla campus.
- Condition of existing facility at Walla Walla.

South Cascades Market

- Gaps in outpatient specialty and primary care, and inpatient psychiatry.
- Gaps in access to acute hospital care.
- Strengthening of ambulatory care component at White City.
- Seismic construction issues at Portland, Roseburg and White City.
- Condition of existing inpatient facility at Roseburg.
- Review of projected small bed section (surgery) at Roseburg for quality and cost efficiency.
- NCA construction of columbarium or casket burial site on Roseburg campus.
- Enhanced use lease at Roseburg with National Forest Service.
- Collocation of VBA on Portland campus.

Western Washington Market

- Gaps in outpatient specialty and primary care; and inpatient medicine and psychiatry.
 - No significant gaps in access to primary, hospital, and tertiary care.
 - Seismic construction issues at American Lake and Seattle.
 - Re-evaluation of overall space scores for research at Seattle.
 - Collocation of VBA on Seattle campus.
 - Evaluation of high potential for enhanced-use lease at Seattle.
 - Sharing opportunities with DoD.
- Source: VISN 20 Release - Dec 5, 2002.

VA Launches Two National Multiple Sclerosis Centers

Drawing on well-established resources to provide high-quality care to veterans who have Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a chronic neurological disease, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will establish two Multiple Sclerosis Centers. The two MS centers will be created at the Baltimore VA Medical Center and jointly at the Portland and Seattle VA medical centers to coordinate the activities of existing programs for MS patients at other VA sites. The centers will also improve care, and promote research and education in MS.

Each MS center will conduct research covering basic biomedicine, rehabilitation, health services delivery and clinical trials. The two centers will facilitate access to care for veterans regardless of their location through advances in telemedicine. MS is a chronic, unpredictable neurological disease that affects the central nervous system. There is no cure for MS yet, although drugs can help slow the course of the disease or ease symptoms in some patients. The symptoms of MS are highly variable, depending on the areas of the central nervous system that have been affected. Initial symptoms of MS often include difficulty in walking, abnormal sensations such as numbness.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Dec. 3, 2002

Veterans Benefits To Increase By 1.4 Percent

- Monthly compensation for 3.3 million veterans and survivors will increase 1.4 percent in December.
 - The annual cost of living increase in veterans benefits matches the increase to Social Security beneficiaries using a formula that considers the consumer price index for urban wage earners and clerical workers.
 - The increase in payment rates was provided by the Veterans’ Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2002, which was signed by President Bush on October 23.
 - The 1.4 percent increase will first appear in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) payments received in January that reflect benefits earned in December, when the increase becomes effective.
- Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Nov. 1, 2002

VA Launches “Faces Behind the File” Program

- Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi today kicked off “The Faces Behind the File” project when four Pearl Harbor survivors shared their personal experiences of December 7, 1941 with an audience that included VA employees, senior VA officials and national VSO representatives.
 - The commemorative program, “Pearl Harbor - I Was There,” is the first of a series of events called “The Face Behind the File” project. The Secretary created the series after an employee suggested programs to familiarize VA employees with the experiences of veterans.
 - Four veterans who were at Pearl Harbor recounted their experiences with VA employees nationwide on the VA Knowledge Network’s Communication Channel. Broadcasts will be shown throughout December on VA’s cable network.
 - “This program is an opportunity to hear from survivors about events that changed the history of the world, as they describe what happened and the effect that tragic day had on their lives,” said Secretary Principi. “Future programs will focus on other events shaped by our nation’s veterans.”
- Source: U.S.DVA News Release – Dec. 6, 2002

**VA Researchers Receive White House Grant for
Addiction Research**

Scientists from the James A. Haley VA Medical Center in Tampa are sharing a \$5.85 million federal grant to research the molecular causes of drug addiction.

“Substance abuse and alcoholism are prime symptoms for many combat veterans still suffering from trauma,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi. “The Department of Veterans Affairs has been in the medical forefront for treatment and research concerning these debilitating addictions.”

Under the grant, scientists will purchase the latest technological devices for genetic research and protein analysis. Their goal is to study all 30,000 genes and their proteins to identify “markers” in the blood that indicate recent drug use. Later research will focus on identifying genetic factors that dispose people to addiction and on finding ways to disrupt the biochemical reactions involved in addiction.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Nov. 5, 2002

VA Offers New Treatment for Veterans with Hepatitis C

Less than 10 days after a new treatment for hepatitis C was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) made it available to enrolled veterans.

“We take care of more patients with this debilitating liver disease than any other health system in the country – more than 70,000 a year,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi.

The treatment approved by the FDA Oct. 16 is called “pegylated interferon alfa-2a.” VA has made arrangements with the manufacturer to ship the new drug to VA facilities sooner than any other medical system.

Several advances in treating hepatitis C, particularly with the introduction of the “pegylated interferons,” include drugs that act against the hepatitis C virus used alone or in combination with other drugs.

VA has screened more than 2.6 million veterans for hepatitis C risk factors since the system-wide policy was established in 1999. To better manage and improve patient care, VA created a national case registry of patients.

For further information on hepatitis C see www.va.gov/hepatitisc.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Nov. 1, 2002

**VA Announces Members of Disability Advisory
Committee**

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi has named six new members to a panel advising him on Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) programs for veterans with severe disabilities.

The Advisory Committee for Prosthetics and Special Disabilities Programs advises VA on services for veterans with spinal cord injury, blindness or vision impairment, loss of extremities or loss of their use, deafness or hearing impairment, and other serious disabilities. It also coordinates activities in and outside of VA to develop and test prosthetic devices.

Named to the committee are John E. Derr of Anacortes, Wash.; Robert S. Gailey Jr. of Miami; Dr. Douglas G. Smith of Seattle; Dr. James Leo Green Jr. of St. Petersburg, Fla.; Lee Ann C. Golper of Nashville, Tenn.; and Jeffrey Dolezal of Washington, D.C.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Oct. 24, 2002

VA Doubles Gulf War Research Funding

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) plans to make available up to \$20 million for research into Gulf War illnesses during fiscal year 2004, a figure twice the amount spent by VA in any previous year.

The announcement, made by VA Deputy Secretary Dr. Leo S. Mackay Jr., highlighted a two-day meeting of VA’s Research Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans Illnesses. The decision was, in part, a response to a committee report in June concerning areas of research that need further study.

The committee, commissioned last January by VA Secretary Anthony Principi and chaired by James Binns, a Vietnam veteran, includes scientists, business people, Gulf War veterans and veterans advocates. Some members have been critical of previous government efforts to diagnose, treat and research the medical problems of some veterans.

In addition to the increase in funding, VA plans to create a special center dedicated to medical imaging technologies. These technologies are important to understanding Gulf War illnesses as well as other conditions important to veterans.

To date, the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services and VA have spent \$213 million on 224 research projects to answer the questions surrounding Gulf War illnesses.

Source: U.S. DVA News Release – Oct. 30, 2002



Federal Legislation

The U.S. Senate and House have adjourned, sine die. The 108th Congress will convene at 12 noon, Tuesday, January 7, 2003.

Veterans Benefits Act of 2002 - S. 2237

To improve authorities of the Department of Veterans Affairs relating to veterans’ compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation, and pension benefits, education, benefits, housing benefits, memorial affairs benefits, life insurance benefits, and certain other benefits for veterans, to improve the administration of benefits for veterans, to make improvements in procedures relating to judicial review of veterans’ claims for benefits, and for other purposes.

- Signed by President, 12/6/02.

POW/MIA Memorial Flag Act of 2002-S. 1226

Includes the World War II Memorial among the locations where the National League of Families POW/MIA flag is required to be displayed. Requires such flag to be displayed at such Memorial, as well as the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, on any day on which the United States flag is displayed.

- Public Law 107-323, 12/4/02.

**Department of Veterans Affairs Emergency
Preparedness Act of 2002 - H.R. 3253**

Establishes four medical emergency preparedness centers to develop methods of defense against the effects of chemical, biological or other weapons posing a threat to public health and safety and to provide education, training and advice to health care professionals outside the Veterans Health Administration.

- Public Law 107-287, 11/7/02

**Bob Stump National Defense Authorization
Act for Fiscal Year 2003 - H.R. 4546**

Authorizes appropriations for fiscal year 2003 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy.

It also establishes special compensation for certain retirees with at least 20 years of active duty and (a) any disability rating that is associated with a Purple Heart or (b) a disability rating of 60% or higher that is due to a combat-related or operations-related disability. Eligible retirees will have to apply for this new compensation. The effective date of the new special compensation will be June 1, 2003.

- Public Law 107-314, 12/2/02.

WA State Legislature



The Washington State Legislature will convene the 2003 Legislative Session on January 13, 2003. For information and updates on legislation pertaining to veterans throughout session, please visit: www.dva.wa.gov and click on Legislative Updates or contact Heidi Audette at (360)725-2154.

HATS
OFF!

Our Volunteers - Priceless

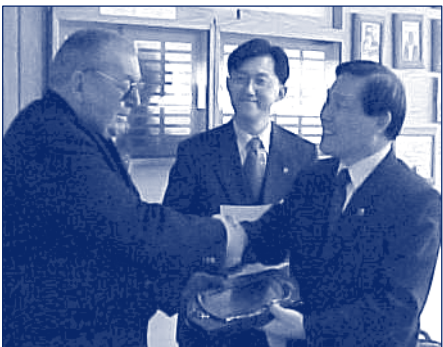


To attempt to put a dollar figure on the value of volunteerism cheapens and undermines the basic concept. Volunteering is rich and diverse. Volunteering is not just about organizing hundreds or thousands of volunteers for large events like the Olympics. It is thousands of volunteers in minor league sports, shelters for the homeless, giving aid to seniors, holding hands in a hospice or cleaning up a local stream bed. It is spontaneous acts of kindness like helping a neighbor shovel their walk, coming to the aid of a stranded motorist or helping an elderly person cross a busy street. These large and small acts, given freely, are what bind communities together. Volunteering is *helping*, not hiring; *giving*, not taking; *contributing*, not counting.

To All Who Have Helped, Given and Contributed – *Thank you!*

Korean Consul General Delivers
Korean War Medals

More than 260 Korean War Veterans received the Korean War Medal during a Veterans Day celebration at the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena. The Korean Consul General Byong Rok Moon traveled from Seattle to deliver a heartfelt message of gratitude from the Republic of Korea. Assisted by representatives from Congressman George Nethercutt’s office as well as the State of Washington and Idaho, each Korean War Veteran present was personally presented the medal.



At a luncheon following the ceremony, Consul Moon presented a plaque to Richard Hazelmyer, the Vice Commander of VFW Post 51 in Spokane. Hazelmyer initiated the request for applications for the KWM and ended up receiving over 400 applications, completing the process for nearly all of them in time for the Veterans Day program.

WWII Normandy Vets Eligible for
Special Medal

The fiftieth anniversary of D-Day, the beginning of the Allies’ assault on Normandy during World War II, was celebrated in France beginning in 1994, but the search for veterans who participated in the historic event continues. As part of the memorial, 35,000 veterans were presented with the “*Jubile de Liberte*” medal.

The invasion of Normandy took place over a period of several months, from June to September, 1944. In 1991 Gov. Renee Garec of Normandy and the Normandy Regional Council commissioned the Jubilee of Liberty medal to recognize the contribution Allied soldiers made to restoring freedom to the French people.

Because so many veterans could not make the trip to Europe for the commemoration at that time, the French government has sent medals to the United States for distribution to qualified veterans.

Congressman George Nethercutt, 5th Congressional District, is among many members of Congress encouraging veterans who served in Normandy to contact their offices to find out how to receive the medal. Washington State veterans may contact Congressman Nethercutt’s Spokane Office at (509) 353-2374 for more information and an application.

62d Medical Brigade to Sponsor Korean War Medical
Commemoration Program

Medical service provided by the Army Medical Department during the Korean War will be highlighted at a special commemoration program and luncheon on Feb. 4, 2003, at The American Lake Club on North Fort Lewis.

Dr. John T. Greenwood, Historian for the Army’s Surgeon General, will begin the program at 10:00 a.m. with a presentation on Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals – MASH – and their direct support of the combat units. Most of the over 100,000 US Servicemen wounded during the Korean War were treated at these MASH units, which were located as close to the front lines as possible.

Lunch will follow the presentation and reservations – to include menu choice – are required, along with \$10.00 per person, by Jan. 29, 2003.

For additional information, contact: COL (Ret.) Wiscarson (253) 531-6562, wiscarson@aol.com ; or CPT Lonsdale (253) 966-7064, corie.lonsdale@nw.amedd.army.mil

Korean War Medical Commemoration Program and luncheon
Feb. 4, 2003, American Lake Club - North Fort Lewis

Name: _____

Please select one:

- Caesar Salad with soup of the day _____
French Dip with garden salad _____
Chicken Croissant with garden salad _____

Please make check payable to AUSA, \$10.00 per person, and mail to:
AUSA, PO Box 33181, Fort Lewis, WA 98433.

Make your reservation by Jan 29, 2003



FREEDOM RINGS



“There is no better time than
the Holidays to express our
Appreciation for your Support
and Friendship.
Wishing you a season of joy,
prosperity, and hope for the
future.”

WDVA

